

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 COME-00 EB-07 L-03 H-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6714

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EMIN, CT

SUBJECT: SCED/GOCAR PROBLEM

REF: (A) STATE 042607 B. OTTAW 0519

1. DDI/SCED DIRECTOR OELBAUM WAS SUCCESSFUL IN ARRANGING OVER WEEK-END FOR THE RETURN TO BANGUI OF BRIAN CAMBELL, ONE OF TWO AMERICAN CITIZENS STRANDED IN WESTERN CAR AS A RESULT OF GOCAR INVESTIGATION OF SCED OPERATIONS THERE. IT WAS CONSIDERED ADVISABLE FOR BELGIAN DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF SCED TO ACCOMPANY CAMPBELL ON FLIGHT AS CAMPBELL IS SUFFERING NERVOUS SHOCK ACCORDING TO MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OELBAUM RECEIVED FEBRUARY 21. WE ARE WORKING TO HAVE CAMPBELL GIVEN PERMISSION TO MAKE EARLY DEPARTURE ON MEDICAL GROUNDS. PAUL JOLIS, SON OF DDI'S NEW YORK-BASED PRESIDENT ALBERT JOLIS AND ONLY REMAINING AMERICAN AT SCED FIELD HEADQUARTERS, SPOKE WITH OELBAUM BY RADIO FEBRUARY 21 AND CONFIRMED THAT HE IS WELL. IN VIEW OF CONCERN THAT HE HAD EXPRESSED TO DEPARTMENT (REF A) CONCERNING WELFARE OF PAUL, SUGGEST AF/C CONTACT ALBERT JOLIS TO REPORT FOREGOING.

2. DURING DEDICATION OF BOALI HYDROELECTRIC PLANT FEBRUARY 21 AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED WITH MINISTER OF STATE JOSEPH POTOLOT, FORMER FONMIN AND BOKASSA CONFIDANTE PROBLEMS WHICH AMERICAN SCED EMPLOYEES ARE ENCOUNTERING IN EFFORTS TO RETURN TO BANGUI. HE ASSURED US THAT THE GOCAR WOULD IMPOSE NO OBSTACLES. AMBASSADOR STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF GETTING A DIALOGUE STARTED CONCERNING

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PRESENT SCED/GOCAR DIFFICULTIES AND SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT DDI/SCED

OFFICIALLY SHARED THIS VIEW. POTOLOT RESPONDED AFFIRMATIVELY. POTOLOT ALSO REITERATED PRESIDENT BOKASSA'S ANNOYANCE AT ORIGINAL STATE DEPARTMENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE DISPUTE. AMBASSADOR PUT THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON THIS POINT. POTOLOT VOLUNTEERED THE VIEW THAT PRESIDENT DID NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCED OPERATIONS AND BUYING OFFICES. IN THIS CONNECTION HE INDICATED NEED FOR DIRECT SCED-GOCAR DISCUSSIONS.

3. IT IS TOO SOON TO MAKE ANY PREDICTIONS ON OUTCOME OF SCED'S TROUBLES. EVEN GETTING DIALOGUE UNDERWAY WITH A GOCAR STILL PRE-OCCUPIED WITH AFTERMATH OF ABORTIVE COUP MAY NOT BE EASY. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR CHATILLON DEPARTED FOR YAOUNDE THIS PAST WEEK EMPTY-HANDED AS REGARDS SCED/GOCAR ISSUE. WHEN CHATILLON BROUGHT UP SCED QUESTION AT HIS CREDENTIALS CEREMONY, BOKASSA LET IT BE KNOWN THAT HE HAD NUMBER OF BONES TO PICK WITH SCED. BOKASSA WAS OBSCURE HOWEVER, AND NO DETAILS EMERGED IN BRIEF EXCHANGE. HE UNDERTOOK INSTEAD TO HAVE TREASURY MINISTER KOYAMBA AND FINMIN GBOKOU GET IN TOUCH WITH AMBASSADOR CHATILLON IN COURSE OF HIS VISIT. NOTHING CAME OF THIS AND CANADIAN AMBASSADOR DEPARTED WITHOUT HAVING MADE PROGRESS ON SUBSTANCE OF DISPUTE.

4. WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR SITUATION CLOSELY AND REPORT DEVELOPMENTS IMMEDIATELY.
QUAINTON

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